

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
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R 181232Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1006  
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMEMBASSY KABUL  
AMEMBASSY KARACHI  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
CINCPAC  
AMCONSUL BOMBAY  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 NEW DELHI 6067

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PK, IN, PFOR  
SUBJECT: PAKISTAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISOR'S VISIT TO INDIA

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

PAKISTAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISOR AGHA SHAH'S  
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APRIL 10-14 VISIT TO NEW DELHI WAS ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT  
FORWARD STEP IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF INDO-PAK RELATIONS,  
A PROCESS WHICH QUICKENED IN THE FINAL YEARS OF THE  
GANDHI AND BHUTTO GOVERNMENTS AND HAS BEEN CARRIED ON  
BY THEIR SUCCESSORS. THE SHAHI VISIT WAS FAR LESS  
DRAMATIC THAN THE FEBRUARY VISIT OF INDIAN FOREIGN  
MINISTER VAJPAYEE TO PAKISTAN. THAT EARLIER VENTURE SET

THE STAGE FOR THIS RETURN ROUND AND OBVIOUSLY HELPED FOSTER THE REMARKABLY EASY ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH IT WAS CONDUCTED.

THE MAIN, CONCRETE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE SHAHI VISIT WAS THE SIGNING OF AN AGREEMENT GOVERNING THE DESIGN OF A DAM AT SALAL ON THE CHENAB RIVER IN INDIAN KASHMIR. THE AGREEMENT, WHICH ENDED AN EIGHT YEAR DISPUTE, WAS WIDELY HAILED AS A LAUDABLE EXERCISE OF POLITICAL WILL. ASIDE FROM THEIR NEGOTIATION OF THE SALAL AGREEMENT, THE TWO SIDES WERE ABLE TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS, INCLUDING SUCH CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES AS INDIAN ACQUISITION OF A DEEP PENETRATION STRIKE AIRCRAFT (DPSA), NUCLEAR WEAPONS, AND, INEVITABLY, KASHMIR. BOTH MEA AND THE PAKISTAN EMBASSY HERE TELL US THEY WERE VERY SATISFIED WITH THE WAY THINGS WENT. SHAHI TOLD THE AMBASSADOR HE BELIEVED THE EXCHANGE OF VISITS HAD BEEN HELPFUL. THE TWO SIDES WILL NOW GO ON TO TRADE TALKS, SCHEDULED FOR ISLAMABAD IN MAY, BUT NOTHING DEFINITE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DECIDED ABOUT THE MUCH-TALKED ABOUT VISIT TO INDIA OF GENERAL ZIA UL-HAQ. END INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY.

1. AGHA SHAHI IS A FAMILIAR FIGURE IN NEW DELHI, WHERE DESPITE HIS POST-COUP TITLE HE CONTINUES TO BE REGARDED AS A FOREIGN OFFICE BUREAUCRAT RATHER THAN AS A MEMBER OF THE PAKISTAN POWER ELITE. THIS  
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ASSESSMENT OF THE MAN CONTRIBUTED TO THE UNDRAMATIC, LOW-KEY ATMOSPHERE OF HIS VISIT, WHICH IN THIS REGARD CONTRASTED SHARPLY WITH THE EXCITEMENT AND TENSION WHICH INFORMED THE FEBRUARY VISIT OF THE POLITICALLY POWERFUL EX-JANA SANGHI ATUL BEHARI VAJPAYEE TO A SUSPICIOUS PAKISTAN. THE FACT THAT INDIANS TAKE LESS INTEREST IN PAKISTAN THAN THEY DID IN EARLIER TIMES (AND THAN PAKS DO IN INDIA), THE COMPETITION OF CURRENT DOMESTIC EXCITEMENTS, AND THE AWARENESS THAT VAJPAYEE HAD ALREADY CRACKED THE HIGH-LEVEL ICE ALSO HELPED IN GIVING THE VISIT THAT CHARACTER. NOT THAT SHAHI WAS IGNORED. HE GOT EXTENSIVE PLAY IN THE INDIAN PRESS, WHICH RECORDED HIS CALLS ON PRESIDENT SANJIVA REDDY AND PM DESAI, GAVE GOOD COVERAGE TO HIS WELL-ATTENDED PRESS CONFERENCE, AND HEADLINED HIS SUCCESS IN COMING TO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE INDIANS ON SALAL.

2. THAT THE INDIANS AND PAKS WERE ABLE TO REACH SUCH AN AGREEMENT CAME AS NO SURPRISE. INFORMED OBSERVERS WERE GENERALLY AWARE THAT THE TWO SIDES

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R 181232Z APR 78  
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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE ON THE CONTROVERSIAL TECHNICAL  
ISSUES INVOLVED. THE INDIANS HAD TOLD US BACK IN  
LATE 1976, AFTER TWO ROUNDS AT THE FOREIGN SECRETARY  
LEVEL HAD STALLED, THAT BHUTTO HAD LET IT BE KNOWN  
THAT ONCE THE PAK GENERAL ELECTIONS WERE OUT OF THE  
WAY AN AGREEMENT WOULD BE REACHED. WHAT WAS  
SURPRISING WAS THAT THERE WAS A SERIOUS LAST MINUTE  
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HITCH WHICH KEPT SHAHI IN INDIA AN EXTRA DAY. PAK EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR MUHAHID HUSSAIN TOLD OUR POLITICAL COUNSELOR THAT THIS WAS THE RESULT OF AN INDIAN FOUL. THE INDIAN DRAFT, HE ASSERTED, DID NOT CONFORM TO THE EARLIER UNDERSTANDING. THIS CREATED A DEADLOCK WHICH COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN BROKEN BY THE FOREIGN MINISTERS. THEY WERE ABLE TO DO SO (SHAHI AFTER PHONING ZIA), EXERTING ZIA), EXERTING POLITICAL WILL BE IN A WAY NO BUREAUCRAT COULD HAVE. THE INDIAN VERSION, CONVEYED TO THE POL COUNSELOR BY JOINT SECRETARY I.P. SINGH, WAS LESS DRAMATIC. ACCORDING TO SINGH, THERE WERE SOME "DRAFTING PROBLEMS", A LINE THE TWO SIDES ALSO TOOK PUBLICLY.

3. IN ANY EVENT, THE AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED ON APRIL 14. IT REPRESENTS A SUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO ALLAY PAK FEARS THAT THE DESIGN OF THE DAM COULD ALLOW THE INDIANS EITHER TO WITHHOLD WATER FROM PAKISTAN AT CRUCIAL TIMES OR TO FLOOD THE LOWLANDS (FORTIFICATIONS) ALONG THE CHENAB INSIDE PAKISTAN. (THE CHENAB IS ONE OF THREE "WESTERN" RIVERS ALLOTTED TO PAKISTAN UNDER THE 1960 INDUS WATER TREATY. EXCEPT FOR SOME LIMITED LOCAL USES, INDIA MAY NOT REMOVE WATER FROM THE RIVER, THOUGH IT MAY SET UP DAMS FOR HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER GENERATION. UNDER THE TREATY, PAKISTAN HAS THE RIGHT TO STUDY THE DESIGN OF SUCH STRUCTURES AND OBJECT TO THEM IF THEY FAIL TO MEET TREATY CRITERIA). AGHA SHAHI STATED AFTER THE SIGNING THAT THE AGREEMENT "SAFEGUARDED THE INTEREST OF PAKISTAN." MUHAHID HUSSAIN CLAIMS, HOWEVER, THAT THOUGH THE AGREEMENT PROVIDES MAXIMUM PROTECTION UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT WILL STILL BE NECESSARY FOR THE GOP TO SPEND 30-35 MILLION RUPEES TO BUILD PROTECTIVE, COMPENSATORY, AND

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STORAGE WORKS DOWNSTREAM IF PAKISTAN PUBLIC OPINION IS TO BE SATISFIED WITH THE ARRANGEMENT. HAILING THE AGREEMENT IN A PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENT, VAJPAYEE DECLARED THAT IT AGAIN DEMONSTRATES THAT THE JANATA GOVERNMENT "RESPECTS INHERITED OBLIGATIONS AND SEEKS TO BUILD WITH GREATER VIGOR COOPERATIVE RELATIONS WITH OUR IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS". THE FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE AGREEMENT WOULD HELP CONSOLIDATE AND REINFORCE THOSE POLICIES AND ASSIST IN BUILDING SUBCONTINENTAL STABILITY. EDITORIALS REFLECTED THESE SENTIMENTS AND WERE SINGULARLY FREE OF ANY ALLEGATION THAT THE GOI HAD COMPROMISED INDIAN INTERESTS IN MODIFYING THE DAM DESIGN.

4. ASIDE FROM NEGOTIATING THE SALAL AGREEMENT, THE

INDIAN AND PAK SIDES FOUND THAT IN THE BETTER  
ATMOSPHERE WHICH NOW CHARACTERIZES THE INDO-PAK RELATIONS  
THEY WRE ABLE, IN MUJAHID HUSSAIN'S WORDS, TO TALK  
ABOUT PRACTICALLY EVERYTHING. AS ANTICIPATED HERE, SHAHI  
RAISED THE DPSA SALE. HUSSAIN SAYS THAT THE TACTIC  
THE PAKS PURSUED WAS TO ASK THE INDIANS WHY THEY  
FELT IT NECESSARY TO ACQUIRE A DPSA IN LIGHT OF  
THEIR ALREADY CLEAR AIR SUPERIORITY OVER PAKISTAN. THE  
PAKS RECALLED INDIAN CHARGES THAT GOP ACQUISITION OF  
THE A-7 WOULD CAUSE PROBLEMS IN BOTH INDO-PAK AND INDO-US  
RELATIONS. THE PAKS, UNLIKE THE INDIANS, WERE NOT  
SENDING DELEGATIONS TO PARIS, LONDON, AND STOCKHOLM  
IN THE MANNER OF THE INDIAN REPRESENTATIONS DESIGNED  
TO DISSAUDE THE USG FROM SUPPLYING THE A-7. BUT  
THEY DID WISH TO REGISTER THEIR CONCERN. BOTH THE  
HASSAIN AND THE I.P. SINGH VERSIONS HAVE VAJPAYEE  
REPLYING THAT NO DECISION TO ACQUIRE THE DPSA  
HAD YET BEEN TAKEN. HASSAIN SAYS THAT VAJPAYEE ALSO  
NOTED THAT INDIA NEEDS TO REPLACE ITSAGIN CANBERRAS  
AND HUNTERS.

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5. NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND DISARMANET. SHAHI TOLD THE  
AMBASSADOR THAT HE HAD PROPOSED TO THE INDIANS THAT

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R 181232Z APR 78  
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AMEMBASSY DACCA  
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AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMCONSUL LAHORE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
LUDKFMQ/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 177  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMCONSUL BOMBAY  
CINCPAC  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMCONSUL MADRAS

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SINCE THEY WERE NOT AGREEABLE TO THE PAKISTANI  
SOUTH ASIAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREE ZONE PROPOSAL,  
THEY CONSIDER THE IDEA OF A REGIONAL PACT TO BAN  
NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THE INDIANS, HE SAID, PROMISED  
TO STUDY THE PROPOSAL. THE TWO SIDES ALSO DISCUSSED  
THE POSITIONS THEY WERE PREPARING TO TAKE  
THE SSOD AND ARE REPORED TO HAVE FOUND CONSIDERABLE  
IDENTITY OF VIEW.

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6. KASHMIR. KASHMIR CAME UP IN BOTH THE PRIVATE  
DISCUSSIONS AND IN SHAHI'S PRESS CONFERENCE. HIS  
PRIVATE APPROACH, WE ARE TOLD, WAS THAT KASHMIR WAS  
NOW THE ONLY PROBLZM BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE  
ALSO SOUGHT, INDIRECTLY, TO SCOUT THE CHARGE THAT  
THERE HAD BEEN A SECRET BHUTTO-GANDHI AGREEMENT ON  
THEISSUE. APPARENTLY THE DISCUSSIONS HE HAD ABOUT KASHMIR  
WERE AS AMICABLE AS COULD BE EXPECTED. WE DOUBT THAY  
WERE PROTRACTED. SHAHI TOLD HIS PRESS CONFERENCE  
THAT KASHMIR WAS A MATTER WHICH SHOULD APPROPRIATELY  
BE DISCUSSED AT THE LEVEL OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT, AND  
SAID THAT THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS  
WOULD BE COMPLETED ONCE THE ISSUE WAS SOLVED. ASKED  
WHAT KIND OF SOLUTION HE ENVISAGED, SHAHI REPORTEDLY  
SAID THAT IT WAS A MATTER FOR DISCUSSION AND THAT A  
SOLUTION SHOULD BE POSSIBLE IN A TENSION-FREE ATMOSPHERE.  
AN INDIAN SPOKESMAN LATER SAID THAT IF PAKISTAN WISHED  
TO DISKUSS KASHMIR, INDIA "WILL NOT REFUSE." THE  
GOI, THE SPOKESMAN SAID, WOULD ENGAGE IN A DISCUSSION  
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SIMLA AGREEMENT. IN THE WORDS  
OF PM DESAI, INDIA WOULD DO SO WITH A VIEW TO  
CONVINCING PAKISTAN OF HER POINT OF VIEW. (COMMENT:  
FAT CHANCE.) HUSSAIN SAYS THAT IN THE PRIVATE TALKS  
THE INDIANS STRESSED THE NEED TO IMPROVE THE

ATMOSPHERE AND MOVE AHEAD TO AGREEMENTS, EXCHANGES,  
ETC., A POSITION IT SEEMS TO US THE PAKS NOW APPEAR  
MUCH MORE INCLINED TO GO ALONG WITH THAN HAS HISTORICALLY  
BEEN THE CASE.

7. THE PRESS CONFERENCE IN SUCH MARKED CONTRAST TO VAJPAYEE'S  
ORDEAL IN PINDI, WAS AN EASY EXERCISE FOR  
SHAHI. THE INDIAN JOURNALISTS WERE REMARKABLY TAME.  
THERE WERE VIRTUALLY NO TOUGH QUESTIONS: THE TIMING  
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OF ELECTIONS IN PAKISTAN AND THE FATE OF  
BHUTTOM WERE BOTH IGNORED. (HUSSAIN SAYS THAT ALTHOUGH  
OFFICIAL INDIAN SILENCE ON THE BHUTTO SETNENCING  
DID NOT SPECIFICALLY COME UP IN THE TALKS, GOP  
SATISFACTION WITH THE INDIAN POSITION HAS OTHERWISE  
BEEN CONVEYED TO DELHI. THE REFERENCES IN SHAHI'S  
STATEMENTS TO INDIAN NON-INTERFERENCE ALSO SEEM TO REFLECT  
THIS SATISFACTION.) QUESTIONS ON KASHMIR  
CAME FROM A SINGLE REPORTER. SHAHI HANDLED THEM AND  
OTHER QUESTIONS EASILY. TOUCHING ON THE OLD PAK  
APPREHENSION OF INDIAN HEGEMONISTIC AMBITIONS IN THE  
REGION, SHAHI NOTED THAT ASIDE FROM KASHMIR IT WAS  
THE ONE PROBLEM WHICH COULD POTENTIALLY PREVENT THE  
TWO COUNTRIES FROM COMING CLOSER. BUT HE HASTENED  
TO ADD THAT HE HAD RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM THE GOI  
THAT IT HARBORED NO SUCH PRETENSIONS AND ADDED THAT  
IT GAVE HIM PLEASURE IN SAYING THAT THE GOI IS SINCERE  
IN ITS PROFESSIONS OF SOVEREIGN EQUALITY. VAJPAYEE'S  
STATEMENTS WERE SIMILARLY WARM AND HEFPUF.

8. TRADE WAS ALSO DISCUSSED, WITH BOTH SIDES EXPRESSING  
INTEREST IN EXPANDING IT AND MAKING IT MORE MUTUALLY  
BENEFICIAL. WE GATHER THAT THE PAKS WERE MORE CONCERNED  
THAN THE INDIANS WITH THE IMPORTANCE OF ROUGH EQUALITY  
OF TRADE IN EACH DIRECTION, A LONG-STANDING POSITION.  
THE INDIANS APPARENTLY EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE  
"NEAR-BALANCE" RECENTLY ACHIEVED. THERE WILL BE FURTHER  
TALKS NEXT MONTH WHEN AN INDIAN TRADE TEAM VISITS  
ISLAMABAD. WE ARE TOLD BY BOTH SIDES HERE THAT THE  
THORNY ISSUE OF TRANSIT TRADE DID NOT COME UP IN THE  
SHAHI TALKS. THE PAKS IN EFFECT AGAIN TURNED DOWN AN  
INDIAN REQUEST TO REOPEN THEIR CONSULATE IN KARACHI.

9. ZIA'S VISIT. NOTHING WAS DECIDED ABOUT THE PROJECTED  
VISIT OF GENERAL ZIA. ALTHOUGH VAJPAYEE SUBSEQUENTLY  
IS REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD A CALCUTTA AUDIENCE THAT THE  
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CMLA WAS LKELY TO COME TO INDIA IN JUNE, FOLLOWING  
PM DESAI'S TRIP TO WAHINGTON, BOTH OUR INDIAN AND  
PAK SOURCES TELL US THAT NOTHING HAS BEEN NAILED  
DOWN. THE GOI HAS STATED PUBLICLY THAT HE IS WELCOME  
WHENEVER HE CARES TO COME, BUT THE PRESS HERE  
SPECULATES (AND WE CAN UNDERSTAND WHY) THAT GIVEF THE  
GENERAL'S DOMESTIC PREOCCUPATIONS IT MAY BE SOME TIME  
BEFORE HE COMES THIS WAY.  
GOHEEN

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